

Opioid Operational Command Center Review of Demographic Overdose Trends in Maryland by Local Jurisdiction

Table of Contents

Overdose Deaths in Maryland	2
Gender	2
Age	2
Race & Ethnicity	3
Jurisdictional Data	4
Allegany	4
Anne Arundel/Annapolis City	4
Baltimore City	4
Baltimore County	5
Calvert	5
Caroline	5
Carroll	6
Cecil	6
Charles	6
Dorchester	7
Frederick	7
Garrett	7
Harford	8
Howard	8
Kent	8
Montgomery	8
Prince George's	9
Queen Anne's	9
Somerset	9
St. Mary's	9
Talbot	10
Washington	10
Wicomico	10
Worcester	10

Overdose Deaths in Maryland

Data detailed in this year's DORM report show that in 2020, there were 2,799 overdose-related fatalities, the highest annual total in the State of Maryland's history to date. Additionally, there continues to be a growing disparity in overdose-related deaths in the Black community. Between 2016 and 2020, overdose deaths among non-Hispanic Black Marylanders rose by 64.5 percent as compared to deaths in the non-Hispanic white community, which increased by 15.3 percent.

The findings in this year's report have important policy implications, including the need to continue addressing growing racial disparities in overdose deaths and examining fatal overdose rates among individuals aged 55 and older. One potential area of opportunity to reduce overdose deaths among Black Marylanders includes expanding access to buprenorphine for treatment of opioid use disorder (OUD).

Data provided by the Vital Statistics Administration (VSA) of the Maryland Department of Health (MDH) show the number of unintentional drug-and-alcohol-related overdose fatalities increased from 671 deaths in 2011 to 2,799 deaths in 2020, or by 317.1 percent in nine years. There was a 17.7-percent increase in overdose-related deaths in 2020 as compared to 2019, when there were 2,379 fatal overdoses in the state.¹

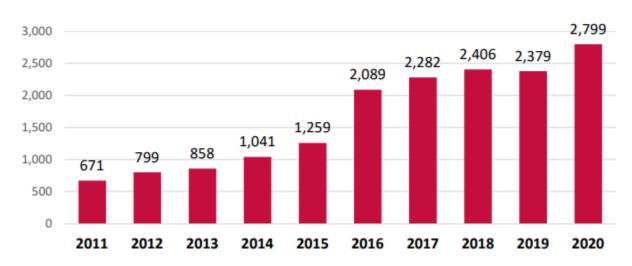


Figure 2: Fatal Overdoses Involving All Substances (2011–2020)

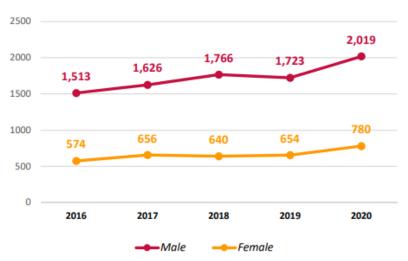
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¹ Maryland Vital Statistics Annual Report 2020"; Vital Statistics Administration, Maryland Department of Health.

Gender

In 2020, 72.1 percent of overdose decedents were male. This trend has been consistent in the last five years; males have consistently accounted for more overdose fatalities than females. However, as illustrated in Figure 3, below, the rate of increase among males and females has been similar in recent years. Between 2016 and 2020, fatal overdoses among males increased by 33.4 percent (from 1,513 to 2,019 overdose deaths) and by 35.9 percent among females (from 574 to 780 overdose deaths).²

Figure 4: Fatal Overdoses by Gender (2016–2020)



Age

In the last five years, overdose fatalities have increased among all age groups in Maryland except for individuals under the age of 25. Since 2018, individuals over the age of 55 have also surpassed all other age groups for fatal overdoses. From 2015 to 2020, fatal overdoses increased by 81.4 percent (from 424 to 769) among individuals over the age of 55 while decreasing by 11.2 percent (from 161 to 143) among individuals under the age of 25.³

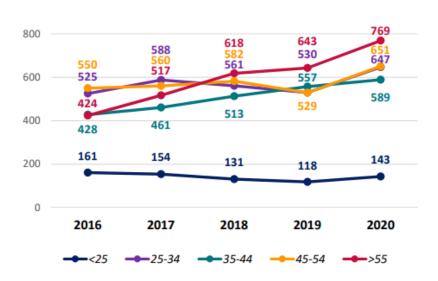


Figure 3: Fatal Overdoses by Age (2016-2020)

² Ibid.

³ Ibid.

Race & Ethnicity

Between 2016 and 2020, the growth of overdose fatalities among non-Hispanic Black Marylanders has outpaced those among non-Hispanic white Marylanders. During this time, the number of overdose fatalities increased 15.3 percent, from 1,349 to 1,556, among non-Hispanic white Marylanders, and by 64.5 percent, from 654 to 1,076, among non-Hispanic Black Marylanders.⁴

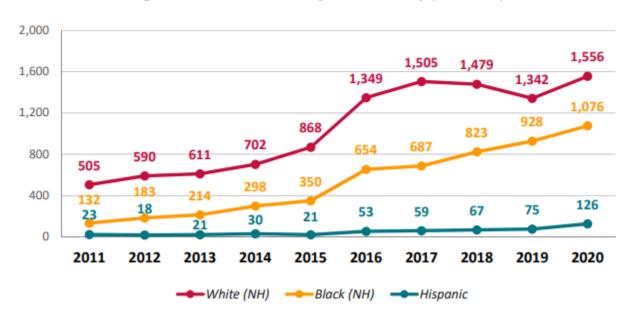


Figure 5: Overdose Deaths by Race/Ethnicity (2011–2020)

Preliminary fatal overdose data for 2021 may show the large increase observed among non-Hispanic white Marylanders in 2020 could be an aberration and that fatal overdose rates by race/ethnicity could be reverting to trends observed prior to the coronavirus pandemic. According to preliminary data, there were 1,412 fatal overdoses among non-Hispanic white Marylanders, 9.3 percent fewer than in 2020, while there were 1,165 overdose deaths among non-Hispanic Black Marylanders, 8.3 percent more than in 2020.⁵

While both non-Hispanic white Marylanders and non-Hispanic Black Marylanders experienced disproportionate rates of overdose in relation to their share of Maryland's population, this disparity was larger among non-Hispanic Black Marylanders than in their non-Hispanic white counterparts. For example, in 2020, 56.4 percent of fatal overdoses involved non-Hispanic white Marylanders, a group that made up 50.6 percent of Maryland's population (a difference of 5.8 percent). Non-Hispanic Black Marylanders, meanwhile, experienced 39.0 percent of fatal overdoses in Maryland while making up 31.1 percent of the state's population (a difference of 7.9 percent).

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ OOCC Overdose Data Dashboard.

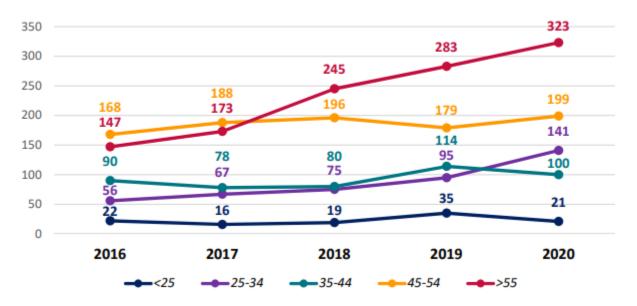
⁶ Ibid

Table 1: Population Disparity Among Non-Hispanic White and Black Marylanders (2020)

Race/Ethnicity	2020 Population Share	2020 Overdose Death Share	Difference
NH White	50.6%	56.4%	5.8%
NH Black	31.1%	39.0%	7.9%

Non-Hispanic Black Marylanders above the age of 55 have been among the groups most impacted by fatal overdoses in Maryland. Deaths among Non-Hispanic Black Marylanders aged 55 and older have increased by 119.7 percent since 2016, from 147 to 323. For comparison, overdose deaths among nonHispanic white Marylanders over the age of 55 increased by 55.7 percent, from 158 to 246, during the same timeframe.⁷

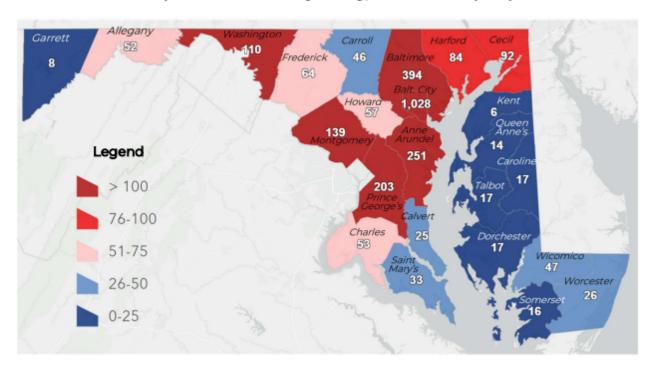
Figure 6: Fatal Overdoses Among Non-Hispanic Black Marylanders by Age (2016–2020)



⁷ Ibid

Geography

Overdose deaths in Maryland are largely concentrated in the central region of the State. In 2020, 59.77 percent of all overdose deaths occurred in Baltimore City (1,028), Baltimore County (394), and Anne Arundel County (251).8



Map 1: Fatal Overdoses by County, All Substances (2020)

Allegany

From 2017 to 2021, opioid-related deaths in Allegany County accounted of 1.6 percent of total opioid related deaths in the State. This represented an increase of 11.11 percent from 2017 to 2021. The average number of opioid-related deaths in Allegany County was 36 per year from 2017 to 2021. Allegany County contains 1.11 percent of the total Maryland population.9

From 2017 to 2021, non-hispanic white Marylanders made up 86.67 percent of total opioid-related deaths in the County, while non-hispanic black Marylanders made up 11.67 percent. Hispanic opioid-related deaths made up 1.67 percent. Non-hispanic white Marylanders make up 86.1 percent of the county population, while non-hispanic black Marylanders make up 8.5 percent, and hispanic Marylanders make up 2.1 percent. Persons under 55 made up 84.4 percent of opioid-related deaths, while persons 55 and up made up 15.56 percent.

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ Maryland 2020 Census

Anne Arundel/Annapolis City

From 2017 to 2021, opioid-related deaths in Anne Arundel County accounted for 9.16 percent of total opioid related deaths in the State. This represented an increase of 5.56 percent from 2017 to 2021. The average number of opioid-related deaths in Anne Arundel County was 206.8 per year from 2017 to 2021. Anne Arundel County contains 9.55 percent of the total Maryland population.

From 2017 to 2021, non-hispanic white Marylanders made up 80.86 percent of total opioid-related deaths in the County, while non-hispanic Black Marylanders made up 16.41 percent. Hispanic opioid-related deaths made up 2.73 percent. Non-hispanic white Marylanders make up 65.1 percent of the county population, while non-hispanic black Marylanders make up 19.1 percent, and hispanic Marylanders make up 9 percent. Persons under 55 made up 83.46 percent of opioid-related deaths, while persons 55 and up made up 16.54 percent.

Baltimore City

From 2017 to 2021, opioid-related deaths in Baltimore City accounted for 38.38 percent of total opioid related deaths in the State. This represented an increase of 45.95 percent from 2017 to 2021. The average number of opioid-related deaths in Baltimore City was 866.2 per year from 2017 to 2021. Baltimore City contains 9.5 percent of the total Maryland population.

From 2017 to 2021, non-hispanic black Marylanders made up 63.77 percent of total opioid-related deaths in the City, while non-hispanic white Marylanders made up 34.08 percent. Hispanic opioid-related deaths made up 2.15 percent. Non-hispanic white Marylanders make up 227.3 percent of the city population, while non-hispanic black Marylanders make up 61.6 percent, and hispanic Marylanders make up 5.6 percent. Persons under 55 made up 62.97 percent of opioid-related deaths, while persons 55 and up made up 37.03 percent.

Baltimore County

From 2017 to 2021, opioid-related deaths in Baltimore County accounted for 15.13 percent of total opioid related deaths in the State. This represented an increase of 11.46 percent from 2017 to 2021. The average number of opioid-related deaths in Baltimore County was 341.4 per year from 2017 to 2021. Baltimore County contains 13.87 percent of the total Maryland population.

From 2017 to 2021, non-hispanic black Marylanders made up 21.63 percent of all opioid-related deaths in the County, while non-hispanic white Marylanders made up 76.10 percent. Hispanic opioid-related deaths made up 2.26 percent. Non-hispanic white Marylanders make up 54.2 percent of the county population, while non-hispanic black Marylanders make up 31.3 percent, and hispanic Marylanders make up 6.2 percent. Persons under the age of 55 made up 76.27 percent of opioid-related deaths, while persons 55 and up made up 23.73 percent.

Calvert

From 2017 to 2021, opioid-related deaths in Calvert County accounted for 1.00 percent of total opioid related deaths in the State. This represented a decrease of 37 percent from 2017 to 2021. The average number of opioid-related deaths in Calvert County was 22.6 per year from 2017 to 2021. Calvert County contains 1.51 percent of the total Maryland population.

From 2017 to 2021, non-hispanic black Marylanders made up 10.81 percent percent of total opioid-related deaths in the County, while non-hispanic white Marylanders made up 89.19 percent. Non-hispanic white Marylanders make up 76.4 percent of the county population, while non-hispanic black Marylanders make up 13.7 percent, and hispanic Marylanders make up 4.8 percent. Persons under 55 made up 90.27 percent of opioid-overdose deaths, while persons 55 and up made up 9.73 percent.

Caroline

From 2017 to 2021, opioid overdose deaths in Caroline County accounted for less than 1 percent of total opioid related deaths in the State. The average number of opioid overdose deaths in Caroline County was 9.8 per year from 2017 to 2021. Caroline County contains .54% percent of the total Maryland population.

From 2017 to 2021, non-hispanic black Marylanders made up 10.42 percent of total opioid-related deaths in the County, while non-hispanic white Marylanders made up 89.58 percent. Non-hispanic white Marylanders make up 74.8 percent of the county population, while non-hispanic black Marylanders make up 13.9 percent, and hispanic Marylanders make up 8.1 percent. Persons under 55 made up 87.76 percent of opioid-related deaths, while persons 55 and up made up 12.24 percent.

Carroll

From 2017 to 2021, opioid overdose deaths in Carroll County accounted for 2.35 percent of total opioid related deaths in the State. The average number of opioid overdose deaths in Carroll County was 53 per year from 2017 to 2021. Carroll County contains 2.81 percent of the total Maryland population.

From 2017 to 2021, non-hispanic black Marylanders made up 5.32 percent of total opioid-related deaths in the County, while non-hispanic white Marylanders made up 93.16 percent. Hispanic Marylanders make up 1.52 percent. Non-hispanic white Marylanders make up 87.3 percent of the county population, while non-hispanic black Marylanders make up 4.1 percent, and hispanic Marylanders make up 4.3 percent. Persons under 55 made up 87.17 percent of opioid-related deaths, while persons 55 and up made up 12.83 percent.

Cecil

From 2017 to 2021, opioid overdose deaths in Cecil County accounted for 2.92 percent of total opioid related deaths in the State. The average number of opioid overdose deaths in Cecil County was 66 per year from 2017 to 2021. This represents an increase of 33 percent from 2017 to 2021. Cecil County contains 1.68 percent of the total Maryland population.

From 2017 to 2021, non-hispanic black Marylanders made up 5.49 percent of total opioid-related deaths in the County, while non-hispanic white Marylanders made up 91.46 percent. Hispanic Marylanders make up 3.05 percent. Non-hispanic white Marylanders make up 83.7 percent of the county population, while non-hispanic black Marylanders make up 7.8 percent, and hispanic Marylanders make up 4.9 percent. Persons under 55 made up 83.89 percent of opioid-related deaths, while persons 55 and up made up 16.11 percent.

Charles

From 2017 to 2021, opioid overdose deaths in Charles County accounted for 1.35 percent of total opioid related deaths in the State. The average number of opioid overdose deaths in Charles County was 30 per year from 2017 to 2021. This represents a decrease of 8.82 percent from 2017 to 2021. Charles County contains 2.70 percent of the total Maryland population.

From 2017 to 2021, non-hispanic black Marylanders made up 23.03 percent of total opioid-related deaths in the County, while non-hispanic white Marylanders made up 75.66 percent. Hispanic Marylanders make up 1.32 percent. Non-hispanic white Marylanders make up 34.7 percent of the county population, while non-hispanic black Marylanders make up 52 percent, and hispanic Marylanders make up 7 percent. Persons under 55 made up 86.84 percent of opioid-related deaths, while persons 55 and up made up 13.16 percent.

Dorchester

From 2017 to 2021, opioid overdose deaths in Dorchester County accounted for less than 1 percent of total opioid related deaths in the State. The average number of opioid overdose deaths in Dorchester County was 12 per year from 2017 to 2021. This represents an increase of 100.00 percent from 2017 to 2021. Dorchester County contains .53 percent of the total Maryland population.

From 2017 to 2021, non-hispanic black Marylanders made up 31.67 percent of total opioid-related deaths in the County, while non-hispanic white Marylanders made up 62.1 percent. Non-hispanic white Marylanders make up 66.6 percent of the county population, while non-hispanic black Marylanders make up 29.2 percent, and hispanic Marylanders make up 6.2 percent. Persons under 55 made up 85.25 percent of opioid-related deaths, while persons 55 and up made up 14.75 percent.

Frederick

From 2017 to 2021, opioid overdose deaths in Frederick County accounted for 2.66 percent of total opioid related deaths in the State. The average number of opioid overdose deaths in Frederick County was 60 per year from 2017 to 2021. This represents a decrease of -33.33 percent from 2017 to 2021. Frederick County contains 4.41 percent of the total Maryland population.

From 2017 to 2021, non-hispanic black Marylanders made up 8.87 percent of total opioid-related deaths in the County, while non-hispanic white Marylanders made up 88.05 percent. Hispanic Marylanders make up 3.07 percent. Non-hispanic white Marylanders make up 69.3 percent of the county population, while non-hispanic black Marylanders make up 11.6 percent, and hispanic Marylanders make up 11.3 percent. Persons under 55 made up 89.33 percent of opioid-related deaths, while persons 55 and up made up 10.67 percent.

Garrett

From 2017 to 2021, opioid overdose deaths in Charles County accounted for less than 1 percent of total opioid related deaths in the State. The average number of opioid overdose deaths in Charles County was 4.8 per year from 2017 to 2021. This represents an increase of 50.00 percent from 2017 to 2021. Garrett County contains .47 percent of the total Maryland population.

From 2017 to 2021, non-hispanic white Marylanders made up 100 percent of opioid related deaths. Non-hispanic white Marylanders make up 96 percent of the county population, while non-hispanic black Marylanders make up 1.1 percent, and hispanic Marylanders make up 1.3 percent. Persons under 55 made up 91.67 percent of opioid-related deaths, while persons 55 and up made up 8.33 percent.

Harford

From 2017 to 2021, opioid overdose deaths in Harford County accounted for 3.68 percent of total opioid related deaths in the State. The average number of opioid overdose deaths in Harford County was 83 per year from 2017 to 2021. This represents a decrease of 8.60 percent from 2017 to 2021. Harford County contains 4.23 percent of the total Maryland population.

From 2017 to 2021, non-hispanic black Marylanders made up 13.90 percent of total opioid-related deaths in the County, while non-hispanic white Marylanders made up 83.41 percent. Hispanic Marylanders make up 2.68 percent. Non-hispanic white Marylanders make up 74 percent of the county population, while non-hispanic black Marylanders make up 15.4 percent, and hispanic Marylanders make up 5.1 percent. Persons under 55 made up 84.10 percent of opioid-related deaths, while persons 55 and up made up 15.90 percent.

Howard

From 2017 to 2021, opioid overdose deaths in Howard County accounted for 1.78 percent of total opioid related deaths in the State. The average number of opioid overdose deaths in Howard County was 40.2 per year from 2017 to 2021. This represents a decrease of -31.91 percent from 2017 to 2021. Howard County contains 5.39 percent of the total Maryland population.

From 2017 to 2021, non-hispanic black Marylanders made up 27.37 percent of total opioid-related deaths in the County, while non-hispanic white Marylanders made up 67.89 percent. Hispanic Marylanders make up 4.74 percent. Non-hispanic white Marylanders make up 48.6 percent of the county population, while non-hispanic black Marylanders make up 20.8 percent, and hispanic Marylanders make up 7.6 percent. Persons under 55 made up 85.57 percent of opioid-related deaths, while persons 55 and up made up 14.43 percent.

Kent

From 2017 to 2021, opioid overdose deaths in Kent County accounted for less than 1 percent of total opioid related deaths in the State. The average number of opioid overdose deaths in Kent County was 6 per year from 2017 to 2021. This represents an increase of 100.00 percent percent from 2017 to 2021. Kent County contains .31 percent of the total Maryland population.

From 2017 to 2021, non-hispanic black Marylanders made up 20.00 percent of total opioid-related deaths in the County, while non-hispanic white Marylanders made up 80.00 percent. Non-hispanic white Marylanders make up 77.8 percent of the county population, while non-hispanic black Marylanders make up 14.3 percent, and hispanic Marylanders make up 4.9 percent. Persons under 55 made up 73.33 percent of opioid-related deaths, while persons 55 and up made up 26.67 percent.

Montgomery

From 2017 to 2021, opioid overdose deaths in Montgomery County accounted for 4.17 percent of total opioid related deaths in the State. The average number of opioid overdose deaths in Montgomery County was 94.2 per year from 2017 to 2021. This represents an increase of 32.97 percent from 2017 to 2021. Montgomery County contains 17.23 percent of the total Maryland population.

From 2017 to 2021, non-hispanic black Marylanders made up 21.35 percent of total opioid-related deaths in the County, while non-hispanic white Marylanders made up 67.42 percent. Hispanic Marylanders make up 11.24 percent. Non-hispanic white Marylanders make up 42.2 percent of the county population, while non-hispanic black Marylanders make up 20.4 percent, and hispanic Marylanders make up 20.1 percent. Persons under 55 made up 85.14 percent of opioid-related deaths, while persons 55 and up made up 14.86 percent.

Prince George's

From 2017 to 2021, opioid overdose deaths in Prince George's County accounted for 5.73 percent of total opioid related deaths in the State. The average number of opioid overdose deaths in Prince George's County was 129.4 per year from 2017 to 2021. This represents an increase of 35.48 percent from 2017 to 2021. Prince George's County contains 17.23 percent of the total Maryland population.

From 2017 to 2021, non-hispanic black Marylanders made up 64.36 percent of total opioid-related deaths in the County, while non-hispanic white Marylanders made up 26.06 percent Hispanic Marylanders made up 9.58 percent. Non-hispanic white Marylanders make up 11.9 percent of the county population, while non-hispanic black Marylanders make up 64.1 percent, and hispanic Marylanders make up 20.4 percent. Persons under 55 made up 68.68 percent of opioid-related deaths, while persons 55 and up made up 31.32 percent.

Queen Anne's

From 2017 to 2021, opioid overdose deaths in Queen Anne's County accounted for less than 1 percent of total opioid related deaths in the State. The average number of opioid overdose deaths in Queen Anne's County was 12 per year from 2017 to 2021. This represents an increase of 133.33 percent from 2017 to 2021. Queen Anne's County contains .81 percent of the total Maryland population.

From 2017 to 2021, non-hispanic black Marylanders made up 16.95 percent of total opioid-related deaths in the County, while non-hispanic white Marylanders made up 83.05 percent. Non-hispanic white Marylanders make up 85.8 percent of the county population, while non-hispanic black Marylanders make up 6.3 percent, and hispanic Marylanders make up 4.6 percent. Persons under 55 made up 83.33 percent of opioid-related deaths, while persons 55 and up made up 16.67 percent.

Somerset

From 2017 to 2021, opioid overdose deaths in Somerset County accounted for less than 1 percent of total opioid related deaths in the State. The average number of opioid overdose deaths in Somerset County was 8 per year from 2017 to 2021. This represents an increase of 200 percent from 2017 to 2021. Somerset County contains .4 percent of the total Maryland population.

From 2017 to 2021, non-hispanic black Marylanders made up 23.81 percent of total opioid-related deaths in the County, while non-hispanic white Marylanders made up 76.19 percent. Non-hispanic white Marylanders make up 51.6 percent of the county population, while non-hispanic black Marylanders make up 40.9 percent, and hispanic Marylanders make up 4.1 percent. Persons under 55 made up 71.43 percent of opioid-related deaths, while persons 55 and up made up 28.57 percent.

Saint. Mary's

From 2017 to 2021, opioid overdose deaths in Saint Mary's County accounted for 1.42 percent of total opioid related deaths in the State. The average number of opioid overdose deaths in Saint Mary's County was 32 per year from 2017 to 2021. This represents an increase of 12.12 percent from 2017 to 2021. Saint Mary's County contains 1.85 percent of the total Maryland population.

From 2017 to 2021, non-hispanic black Marylanders made up 16.98 percent of total opioid-related deaths in the County, while non-hispanic white Marylanders made up 79.25 percent. Hispanic Marylanders made up 3.77 percent. Non-hispanic white Marylanders make up 73 percent of the county population, while non-hispanic black Marylanders make up 15.2 percent, and hispanic Marylanders make up 5.7 percent. Persons under 55 made up 88.05 percent of opioid-related deaths, while persons 55 and up made up 11.95 percent.

Talbot

From 2017 to 2021, opioid overdose deaths in Talbot County accounted for less than 1 percent of total opioid related deaths in the State. The average number of opioid overdose deaths in Talbot County was 11.2 per year from 2017 to 2021. This represents an increase of 50.00 percent from 2017 to 2021. Talbot County contains .61 percent of the total Maryland population.

From 2017 to 2021, non-hispanic black Marylanders made up 23.21 percent of total opioid-related deaths in the County, while non-hispanic white Marylanders made up 76.79 percent. Non-hispanic white Marylanders make up 77.2 percent of the county population, while non-hispanic black Marylanders make up 12.6 percent, and hispanic Marylanders make up 7.4 percent. Persons under 55 made up 76.79 percent of opioid-related deaths, while persons 55 and up made up 23.21 percent.

Washington

From 2017 to 2021, opioid overdose deaths in Washington County accounted for 3.66 percent of total opioid related deaths in the State. The average number of opioid overdose deaths in Washington County was 82.6 per year from 2017 to 2021. This represents an increase of 84.31 percent from 2017 to 2021. Washington County contains 2.51 percent of the total Maryland population.

From 2017 to 2021, non-hispanic black Marylanders made up 17.52 percent of total opioid-related deaths in the County, while non-hispanic white Marylanders made up 81.27 percent. Hispanic Marylanders made up 1.22 percent. Non-hispanic white Marylanders make up 75.8 percent of the county population, while non-hispanic black Marylanders make up 13.2 percent, and hispanic Marylanders make up 6.5 percent. Persons under 55 made up 84.75 percent of opioid-related deaths, while persons 55 and up made up 15.25 percent.

Wicomico

From 2017 to 2021, opioid overdose deaths in Wicomico County accounted for 1.47 percent of total opioid related deaths in the State. The average number of opioid overdose deaths in Wicomico County was 33.2 per year from 2017 to 2021. This represents an increase of 42.86 percent from 2017 to 2021. Wicomico County contains 1.68 percent of the total Maryland population.

From 2017 to 2021, non-hispanic black Marylanders made up 22.29 percent of total opioid-related deaths in the County, while non-hispanic white Marylanders made up 75.90 percent. Hispanic Marylanders made up 1.81 percent. Non-hispanic white Marylanders make up 61.2 percent of the county population, while non-hispanic black Marylanders make up 27.6 percent, and hispanic Marylanders make up 5.8 percent. Persons under 55 made up 81.33 percent of opioid-related deaths, while persons 55 and up made up 18.67 percent.

Worcester

From 2017 to 2021, opioid overdose deaths in Worcester County accounted for less than 1 percent of total opioid related deaths in the State. The average number of opioid overdose deaths in Worcester County was 15.8 per year from 2017 to 2021. This represents an increase of 6.67 percent from 2017 to 2021. Worcester County contains .61 percent of the total Maryland population.

From 2017 to 2021, non-hispanic black Marylanders made up 6.33 percent of total opioid-related deaths in the County, while non-hispanic white Marylanders made up 87.34 percent. Hispanic Marylanders made up 6.33 percent. Non-hispanic white Marylanders make up 80.2 percent of the county population, while non-hispanic black Marylanders make up 12.5 percent, and hispanic Marylanders make up 3.9 percent. Persons under 55 made up 77.22 percent of opioid-related deaths, while persons 55 and up made up 22.78 percent.